REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated August 19, 2009. Claims 1 and 3 to 9 are in the application. Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3 to 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S Patent No. 6,409,401 (Petteruti).[1] Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9 generally concern image processing in which image information is read from a storage device attached to a recording medium. A plurality of level information is written to the storage device. The image information is read from the storage device based on a user instruction.

According to aspects of Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9, there is a specifying of level information of the user who performs the user instruction. In addition, based on the level information of the user who performs the user instruction, there is a determination of a range of image information to be read and a range of image information to be printed.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is ordinarily possible to tailor the range of content to be read from a storage device and/or printed in accordance with the level information of the specified user, even though there may be sharing by several different users with different level information.

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[1]Page 4 of the Office Action includes canceled Claim 2 in the list of rejected claims. However, this is believed to be merely a typographical error, as Claim 2 is not addressed in the body of the rejection.

For example, in one non-limiting example embodiment described in the specification, data of a software specification may be stored in the storage device, and different users may be granted access to different sections of the software specification based on the user's level information. In particular, a general user may be assigned a level information providing access only to a section regarding general functions of the software, whereas a specific user may be assigned a level information providing access to all of the software source code.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus. The apparatus includes an input unit which inputs image information including a first image information having a first attribute for printing and a second image information having a second attribute for storing. The apparatus also includes a printer which prints an image based on the image information input by the input unit on a recording medium to which a storage device is attached. In addition, the apparatus includes a writing unit which writes the image information to the storage device attached to the recording medium. The apparatus further includes a controller which controls the printer and the writing unit to print the image based on the first image information on the recording medium, and to write the second image information with a plurality of level information associated with visualizing to the storage device attached to the recording medium on which the printer prints the image. The apparatus also includes a reading unit which reads the second image information stored in the storage device based on a user instruction, and a specifying unit which specifies a level information of the user who performs the user instruction. The controller controls the printer to print the image based on the second image information read by the reading unit on the recording medium in a case where the reading unit reads the second image information, and controls to determine a

range of the second image information to be read by the reading unit and a range of the second image information to be printed based on the level information of the user specified by the specifying unit from among the plurality of level information written on the storage device by the writing unit.

Independent Claims 7 and 9 are directed to a method and a computer readable program, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 1.

Independent Claim 5 is directed to an image processing method. The method includes a generating step of generating image information to be printed, and a setting step of setting an attribute of the image information generated in the generating step, the attribute indicating whether or not the image information is to be visualized. The method further includes a transmitting step of transmitting the image information generated in the generating step and the attribute set in the setting step to a printer loaded with a recording medium to which a storage device is attached. Additionally, the method includes a reading step of reading image information stored in the storage device based on a user instruction. The method also includes a specifying step of specifying level information of the user who performs the user instruction. An image is printed on the recording medium based on the stored image information read in the reading step in a case where the reading step reads the stored image information. A range of the image information to be read in the reading step and a range of the second image information to be printed are determined based on the level information of the user specified in the specifying step, and wherein the level information of the user is determined from among a plurality of level information written on the storage device.

Independent Claim 8 is directed to a computer readable program stored on a computer-readable medium, substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 5.

Petteruti is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest (i) specifying level information of a user who performs a user instruction to read image information stored on a storage device attached to a recording medium, and (ii) determining a range of image information to be read from the storage device and a range of image information to be printed, based on the level information of the user who performs the user instruction.

As understood by Applicants, Petteruti is directed to a portable printer capable of printing on media and encoding information onto RFID circuits coupled to the media. See Petteruti, Abstract.

Pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action assert that Petteruti (Column 3, lines 20 to 52 and Column 4, line 33 to Column 5, line 26) discloses determining a range of image information to be printed based on a level of authentication information specified for a user that issues a user instruction for reading image information stored in a storage device.

However, the cited portions of Petteruti simply disclose that information stored in the RFID circuit may include, for example, a retail environment, product price, type, or other identifier. A controller validates a received command which includes information such as a product name, product weight, or ID number. See Petteruti, Column 3, lines 20 to 52 and Column 4, line 33 to Column 5, line 26.

Nevertheless, Petteruti's stored information is not seen to correspond to level information written on the storage device. In particular, even accepting for purposes of

argument that various types of information are stored in Petteruti's RFID circuit at once, Petteruti is not seen to disclose or suggest that any of this information corresponds to level information for a particular user, much less level information used to determine a range of image information to be read and printed.

Thus, Petteruti is not seen to disclose or suggest (i) specifying level information of a user who performs a user instruction to read image information stored on a storage device attached to a recording medium, and (ii) determining a range of image information to be read from the storage device and a range of image information to be printed, based on the level information of the user who performs the user instruction.

Therefore, independent Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9 are believed to be allowable over Petteruti, and such action is respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the claims, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters having been raised in the Office Action, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Michael J. Guzniczak/
Attorney for Applicants
Michael J. Guzniczak
Registration No.: 59,820

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10104-3800
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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